GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1989
ANSWERED ON:28.11.2016
Closure of Delhi Public Library
Gandhi Dr. Dharam Vira

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware about the closure and the illegal demolition of the Delhi Public Library, Karolbagh Branch;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there have been alleged lapses from the chairman of the Delhi Library Board (DLB) in this regard despite the Delhi Library Board's unanimous decision and instruction to save the library;

(d) if so, the details in this regard along with the measures taken to save the library from the demolition process;

(e) whether the Government is planning to conduct a CVC enquiry regarding the role of the alleged corrupt practices that lead to the closure and demolition of the library; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE, CULTURE AND TOURISM (INDEPENDENT CHARGE)

(DR. MAHESH SHARMA)

(a) & (b): Yes, Madam. North Delhi Municipal Corporation had served a notice to Delhi Public Library (DPL) to vacate the rented Library Building at Karolbagh stating that the building is very old and in dangerous condition and there is a possibility that building may collapse. DPL approached the High Court of Delhi for obtaining a stay on the demolition of the Library Building. High Court granted interim stay and directed to maintain status quo.

(c) & (d): As per the minutes of 374th meeting of Delhi Library Board held on 18.10.2016 the Board resolved that DPL should not vacate the library building and all out efforts should be taken to safeguard the interest of this library at any cost. Board further resolved that a rejoinder may be filed in the Court in this regard and it was decided that letter should be issued to CPWD for assessing the library building and letter should be issued to Commissioner, North Delhi Municipal Corporation for a vigilance inquiry in this matter. Delhi Public Library filled Writ Petition (C) No.10823/2016 before High Court of Delhi for setting aside the order dated 4.11.2016 of North Delhi Municipal Corporation to vacate the premises. The Writ Petition was withdrawn vide order dated 16.11.2016 of High Court of Delhi as the court has already granted interim stay on 15.11.2016 in another Writ Petition(c)No.10832/2016 Anil Chamadia & Others Versus North Delhi Municipal Corporations & Others. As per information received from DPL, it approached Central Public Works Department and Public works Department for assessment of the library building who have inspected and surveyed the building on 5.11.2016 and 9.11.2016 respectively. Report awaited.

(e) & (f): Delhi Public Library has written to Commissioner(Vigilance), North Delhi Municipal Corporation on 20.10.2016 to conduct vigilance inquiry into the role of NDMC officials in the matter.